

Pilot No. 7: Assessment of Technology Group Template for ConPlan Submission, Track Results, and Report Performance

Focus: Consolidated Plan Document and Performance Reporting

Purpose:

- 1) To determine whether a tool developed by the Technology Working Group will enhance the ability and/or effectiveness of grantees to carry forward data from the Consolidated Plan submission to subsequent Annual Action Plans and reporting.
- 2) To provide a competent tool for better documenting performance

Participants:

State of Pennsylvania; State of Wisconsin; Lancaster County, PA; Madison, WI, and other potential sites within the Wisconsin and St. Louis Field Office jurisdictions

Pilot Testing Participants:

St. Louis Field Office jurisdiction

Pilot Description:

Currently, ConPlans have many pages of text, parts are submitted by a variety of means (hard copy, electronic), and there is a lack of consistent data requested and provided. As a pilot project, the technology working group has designed a tool for grantees to streamline the process for developing a ConPlan and for reporting performance. The proposed tool would:

- Provide one submission mechanism to accommodate all parts of the ConPlan, Action Plan, and performance reports.
- Produce more concise documents to capture goals, strategies, and activities consistent with the use of information technology systems (IDIS) and other performance reports (CAPER.)
- Minimize narratives, optimize use of numerical data, and maximize consistency of data requested.
- Bring forward ConPlan data into annual action plans and performance reports.

- Enhance the ability of HUD staff, grantees, and the public to evaluate performance by improving consistency of data across all three documents.
- Enhance performance measurement by providing a format that encourages grantees to create measurable annual and 5-year goals for each program area.

The tool is currently in Word format. Pilot communities would compare the tool to their existing ConPlan and comment on the completeness and usability of the tool.

A tool has been developed and the St. Louis and Wisconsin Field Offices will test the tool (and subcomponents of it) in communities within their jurisdictions. The Wisconsin Field Office plans to present and discuss the tool at an upcoming conference scheduled in October. Pilot communities would compare the tool to their existing ConPlan and comment on the completeness and usability of the tool.

Summary of Grantee Pilots:

State of Pennsylvania will fulfill the second purpose of this pilot by moving to an “outcomes-based measures” focus rather than “activities” focus. The annual performance report is expected to be more definitive and more understandable.

State of Wisconsin will test the tool (Word format) developed by the Technology Working Group and will provide comment on how their current ConPlan would fit into the proposed tool.

Lancaster County, PA will test the tool (Word format) developed by the Technology Working Group. They planned to enter their 2000-2004 ConPlan and 2003 Action Plan into the tool and survey stakeholders to assess the effectiveness of the tool in helping them understand the County’s program goals and performance in achieving them. After trying this, they reported difficulty in making the format of the plan fit the format of the tool but indicate the tool would be useful for future plans.

Madison, WI will test the tool in Word format developed by the Technology Working Group. The grantee will assess the ease of data entry and retrieval and survey some of its sub-grantees to assess the effectiveness in helping them understand the overall City program goals and performance in achieving them.

Pilot No. 7 Status as of October 31, 2003

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania: Development of the outcomes is a first step to develop the new review process and track results. Once the Con Plan has been revised, the Commonwealth anticipates developing new reporting forms for its grantees and will need to provide training on how to implement the new forms.

The City of Madison, WI held a conference call to discuss the CPII tool developed by the Technology Working Group on Monday, September 22, 2003. Participants included representatives from the City of Madison, WI, the Wisconsin CPD Field Office, the St. Louis CPD Field Office, and Headquarters. Hickorie Hurie from the City of Madison indicated he found the initial March 17 version of the tool that he tested had many positive attributes but it needed further refinement. Mr. Hurie will be provided the latest version of the tool, with a request to review it and determine if it addresses his concerns. The Wisconsin Field Office plans to present the tool at a meeting of grantees on October 21 and 22 and will be working with a new grantee, Fond du Lac, they'll use the tool when they submit their first Con Plan for 2004.

The St. Louis Field Office has three new grantees (a new Urban County and two new entitlement cities) that plan to test the tool between now and November 15, 2003, as they develop their first Consolidated Plans. It is believed that a pilot of this type will be a more reliable test, in that the grantees can start using it at the beginning of the Conplan cycle (when they develop the 3- to 5- year Strategic Plan) as was intended, rather than retrofitting it to a planning process that is already underway. The St. Louis CPD Office also hopes to introduce the tool to all of their grantees at a meeting of the group this fall.

Lancaster County, PA tested a tool (Word format) developed by the TWG; plan to enter their 2000-2004 ConPlan and 2003 Action Plan into tool. They completed a survey of stakeholders to assess effectiveness of tool in helping them understand County's program goals and performance in achieving them. After trying this, report difficulty in making format of plan fit format of tool but indicate tool might be useful for plans.